

**STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS  
ON COMPLAINTS RECEIVED REGARDING BROADCAST  
OF VICTORIA'S SECRET FASHION SHOW**

Hundreds of Americans have registered their displeasure at the Victoria's Secret program, and the promotional advertising that preceded it, that aired on network television last week. I have referred the many complaints that came to my office to the FCC's Enforcement Bureau. What I am urging today is that the Commission look into the complaints we have received and take such action as may be appropriate.

Virtually all of the complainants told me they thought some of the material was indecent. Many of them were especially angered because the program and ads were run during a time in the evening when children were very apt to be watching and when indecent programming may not be aired in accordance with FCC rules.

Congress long ago enacted statutes prohibiting the broadcast of indecent programming when children are likely to be watching, and gave the job of enforcing these laws to the Federal Communications Commission. These laws – which have been upheld by the courts – are designed to protect our youngest citizens from programming which may be inappropriate for them. The Commission has instituted rules to carry out the statute. Now it has the obligation to follow-up on the complaints it has received.

It seems to me that when enforcing the indecency laws of the United States, it is the Commission's responsibility to investigate complaints that the law has been violated, not the citizen's responsibility to prove the violations. Citizens filing complaints with their government are entitled to have their complaints taken seriously.

Speaking more generally, I would hope that television broadcasters would go the extra mile in exercising self-discipline when airing programming during the hours when children are likely to be in the audience. I also hope that television broadcasters will act responsibly when promoting programming that may not be appropriate for younger viewers. By airing such promotions only in programs that are not likely to have children in the audience, stations can protect youngsters from viewing ads that may not be at all appropriate for them.